

Application No. 09/997,368
Amendment B & RCE dated December 8, 2005
Reply to Office Action mailed October 17, 2005

REMARKS

The final Office Action mailed October 17, 2005 considered and rejected claims 1-8, 15-24 and 35-38 of the pending application. Claims 1-8, 15-24 and 35-38 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable and obvious over Tu et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,617,969) in light of official notice.¹

By this paper, claims 1, 15, and 20 have been amended, and new claims 39 and 40 have been added, such that claims 1-8, 15-24 and 35-40 remain pending.² Of these, claim 1 is the only independent claim at issue.

Initially, Applicants note that each of the claims are generally directed to embodiments of a method for coordinating notifications to a user that are generated by one or more entities involved in a particular transaction. Claim 1, for instance, recites a method in which notifications are delivered to a user from multiple entities involved in a single transaction. As further recited, a notification interface is provided and which is enabled to send notifications to a user from multiple entities involved in a particular transaction with the user, and such that the multiple entities are enabled to send notifications to the notification interface, which in turn delivers the notifications to a router. Thereafter, the router determines how to deliver the notifications to the user and subsequently delivers the notifications. It will be appreciated that through the foregoing method, and other claimed embodiments, the one or more notifications corresponding to the particular transaction are ultimately delivered to the user in a coordinated manner.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that the cited art fails to disclose or suggest a method or system as recited in the pending claims. In particular, while Tu appears to generally disclose a system for monitoring events and sending notifications upon the occurrence of such events, Applicants respectfully submit that the notification system in Tu fails

¹ Although the prior art status and some of the assertions made with regard to the cited art is not being challenged at this time, Applicants reserve the right to challenge the prior art status and assertions made with regard to the cited art at any appropriate time in the future, should the need arise, such as, for example in a subsequent amendment or during prosecution of a related application. Accordingly, Applicants' decision not to respond to any particular assertions or rejections in this paper should not be construed as Applicants acquiescing to said assertions or rejections.

² Some claim amendments have been made merely to correct minor grammatical errors (e.g. claims 15 and 20), and not for any reason related to patentability. Support for all claim amendments and newly added claims may be found in the originally filed application, including, but not limited to, paragraphs [013]-[015] and [039]. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the claim amendments do not add new matter.

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to teach or suggest the present invention as recited in the claims. For example, Applicants respectfully submit that Tu fails to teach or suggest a router which, upon receiving the one or more notifications, determines how to deliver the one or more notifications to the user, as claimed. While Tu appears to teach that a server can be connected to a router, thereby connecting the server to the Internet (col. 30, ln. 26-30), Tu further discloses that the notification system, rather than the router, determines how a notification is delivered.

In particular, a notification server (e.g. Vigilance Notification Server) receives a notification which is to be sent out to one or more recipients. (Col 28, ln. 24-30; Figure 30). Thereafter, and for each intended recipient, the notification server reviews the recipient's notification preferences. According to those preferences, the notification server determines the appropriate notification channel/medium (e.g. email, pager) and sends the message according to those preferences. (Col. 29, ln. 55-67). Accordingly, Tu expressly teaches it is determined how a message will be delivered before the message is ever relayed to a router. Thus, Tu teaches that the notification server, rather than the router, determines the intended delivery method or device and fails to disclose a router determining a delivery method or device, as claimed, and particularly in combination with the other recited claim elements.

Additionally, the cited art fails to disclose or suggest, among other things, providing a notification interface which: (i) is enabled to send notifications to a user from multiple entities involved in a particular transaction with the user; (ii) receives one or more notifications from at least one of the multiple entities; and (iii) sends the one or more notifications to a router,

Instead, Tu appears to teach a graphical user interface (GUI) in which a user may specify trigger conditions that must be satisfied prior to sending a notification or exception message. (Col. 19, ln. 58-59). In particular, Tu teaches that, using the GUI, the user defines conditions which may be either independent or dependent on system events. (Col. 19, ln. 60 to col. 20, ln. 4). The conditions are stored as monitor items which are thereafter retrieved and monitored by system agents. (Col. 20, ln. 1- 42). While an exception or notification message is arguably generated at least partially resulting from the GUI input, the message is generated by the agent after GUI input, and is sent to a notification server rather than to the GUI. (Col. 8, ln. 11-44; col. 18, ln. 51-54). After the notification or exception message is generated, it is then sent to an exception and/or notification server which sends the message. (Col. 18, ln. 63 to col. 19, ln. 2;

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Figure 18). In other words, the GUI neither receives or sends notifications to users, let alone notifications from multiple entities involved in a transaction, as claimed.

The notification server similarly fails to act as the notification interface as claimed. In particular, Applicants submit that Tu fails to teach or suggest that the notification server is enabled to send notifications to a user from multiple entities involved in a particular transaction with the user. In particular, Tu merely teaches that messages are generated and sent by one or more agents within the system to the exception and/or notification servers. (Col. 18, ln. 66 to col. 19, ln. 2). Tu does not teach, however, that the one or more agents monitor similar or the same events, let alone transactions. In other words, Tu fails to teach or suggest a notification system enabled to send notifications from multiple entities involved in the same transaction.

As indicated by the Examiner, Tu fails to disclose the term transaction. (Page 2). To supply this element, the Office Action relies on the official notice taken by the Examiner that "business entities transacting business with customers over a network environment, e.g. the Internet, for notification status, has been common knowledge in the art." (Page 2). Applicants respectfully submit, however, that the taken official notice, even if proper, fails to compensate for the failings of Tu. In particular, the official notice fails to teach or suggest that a business transaction over the Internet which provides customers with notification status, even if common practice, includes a single notification system enabled to send notifications from multiple entities involved in the same transaction, as claimed.

Accordingly, in view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that all of the rejections of record are now moot such that it is not necessary to address each of the other assertions of record in the last response. Nevertheless, Applicants reserve the right to challenge any of said assertions in the future. Accordingly, although the foregoing remarks are primarily directed to the independent claims, it will be appreciated that the dependent claims should also be found allowable over the art of record for at least the same reasons. Accordingly, it is not necessary to individually address the rejections to each of the dependent claims at this time. Nevertheless, a few of the dependent claims will be addressed by the following remarks to even further distinguish the claimed invention over the art of record.

New claims 39 and 40, for example, recite embodiments that clarify how a plurality of notifications are sent that cover the transaction from beginning to end in a coordinated fashion (claim 39), and how the same identifier is used by each of the one or more multiple entities

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(claim 40). These additional claim embodiments further distinguish the claimed invention from the cited art of record.

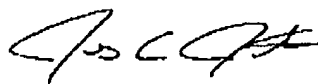
Additionally, with respect to claim 37, Applicants submit that Tu fails to teach or suggest the claimed invention. In particular, Tu fails to teach or suggest at least one of multiple entities passing an identifier which identifies a user to at least one additional entity of the multiple entities, prior to the at least one additional entity sending a notification, as claimed.

Instead, Tu appears to disclose only that one or more agents may generate notification or exception messages, and that the messages are forwarded to an exception and/or notification server. (Col. 18, ln. 66 to col. 19, ln. 2). Tu fails to teach or suggest any communication between agents, let alone passing information between multiple entities which acts as an identifier and identifies a user, as claimed. Moreover, while Tu appears to teach marking an exception with an exception identifier and an event identifier (col. 27, ln. 40-51), these identifiers further fail to act as an identifier as claimed. In particular, the identifiers in Tu merely identify exceptions or events, rather than a user, as recited in the claims.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that all of the pending claims (2, 3, 23, 24, 26-37 and 39-54) are now in condition for prompt allowance. In the event that the Examiner finds remaining impediment to a prompt allowance of this application that may be clarified through a telephone interview, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned attorney.

Dated this 9 day of December, 2005.

Respectfully submitted,



RICK D. NYDEGGER
Registration No. 28,651
JENS C. JENKINS
Registration No. 44,803
Attorneys for Applicant

WORKMAN NYDEGGER
Customer No. 047973

RDN:JCJ:ccn
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